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ABSTRACT

This report is an evaluation of the Head Start Program conducted for a period of 32 weeks within the Pontiac School District. A description of the program is followed by the results of a pre-post administration of a preschool inventory. (Author)

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EVALUATION REPORT

HEAD START PROGRAM

1970-71

PONTIAC SCHOOL DISTRICT

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This report is an evaluation of the Head Start Program conducted for a period of thirty-two (32) weeks within the Pontiac School District. A description of the program is followed by the results of a pre-post administration of a preschool inventory.

Description of Program

The Head Start program is devised to impart to low income children, knowledge which is deemed necessary for mastery of the kindergarten curriculum. In addition to the above factor, the Head Start program contains other components to meet the health needs of the participants. The various components of the program will be briefly described.

PERSONNEL

The staff for the Head Start program consists of sixteen (16) teachers trained in elementary education and sixteen (16) assistants who are community residents. Each teacher has approximately sixteen (16) children in her class.

The Pontiac school system is utilized for services in nutrition, health and social services. The parent involvement coordinator, employed fifty percent of the time, assists with these services, as well as parent involvement and parent education.

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NUTRITION

All children enrolled in Head Start are served a hot lunch daily and a mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack.

School system food service personnel prepare the meal and it is served by the teacher and her assistant. Educational ideas concerning nutrition are also built into the food program.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Referrals are made by teachers concerning special problems of the children. The referrals are sent to the psychologist and educational social workers, employed by the school district.

MEDICAL FOLLOW-UP

The medical follow-up treatment program makes every effort to guarantee all children a complete medical examination, immunizations and blood tests. All children are scheduled into the Osteopathic Medical Clinic for the examination and medical follow-up if necessary.

CORRECTIVE DENTAL PROGRAM

All children are screened by a dentist from the Oakland County Health Department. Treatment is given by a contracted provate dentist and the Dental Clinic personnel at the Health Department.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement in the Head Start program is a major part of the program. Parents attend local school workshops once each month to gain understanding

and insights in the educational process. These workshops are designed to meet individual needs of learning difficulties children may have.

CURRICULUM

The Head Start curriculum emphasizes language development as a nucleus with pre-reading skills, pre-mathematics, muscular development, perceptual development, and informational experiences as the other components of the program.

Self-teaching activities are encouraged through the use of manipulative materials.

The Sesame Street concept is also used as a component of the instructional program. The activities used on the Sesame Street program are reinforced with materials the children can manipulate and materials parents can use at home.

The Individualized instructional approach is used in the program to insure progress by all children. Check lists are developed by the teachers for each child in her class. The check lists serve as a guide for both parents and teachers.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and teacher assistants meet once per week for group planning, interaction and communications. Once per month, teachers are released from their class room duties to take part in full day inservice training.

Evaluation Procedures

Measure

The Preschool Inventory - Revised Edition - 1970 published by Educational Testing Service was used to determine to what extent the Head Start Program reached its objectives in the curriculum area. The inventory provides measures of performance in the following areas:

1. Basic information and vocabulary
2. Number concepts
3. Concepts of size, shape, motion and color.
4. Concepts of time, object class, and social functions
5. Visual motor performance
6. Following instructions

The revised test does not make use of subtest scores since a factor analysis indicated that the items could not be grouped in logical groups or clusters. Scoring then is in terms of total score rather than by subtest groupings.

The Revised Edition of the Preschool Inventory is a considerable improvement over earlier editions of the test. The number of items have been reduced. The revised edition continues to show high reliability in that the reported reliability coefficients are .91 and .92 as determined by the Kuder-Richardson formula and split half procedures. The standard error of measurement for the test is approximately 3.4. The standard error of measurement is another indication of reliability and points out the variation in test scores that can be effected because of random or chance influences. A standard error of 3.4 is considered quite reasonable for a test of this type.

Although the manual for the Preschool Inventory does contain norms, the reported norms are not used in the statistical procedures for this evaluation. The primary concern is the growth of the child in the program rather than with comparison to other children.

No indication of validity studies are reported. Inspection of the items indicates adequate construct validity.

Collection of Data

The Preschool Inventory was administered by teachers and teacher assistants in September of 1970 and February of 1971. Scoring was done by the teachers and the data were analyzed by the Office of Evaluation - Pontiac School District.

Results

Table I presents the pre test means and standard deviations on the 175 children for whom both pre and post test data were available.

Table I

Pre-Test Means and Standard Deviations - Preschool Inventory

School	N	Means	Standard Deviation
Bagley	22	35.54	11.42
Bethune	31	33.97	12.79
Crofoot	19	43.53	10.45
Franklin	45	39.44	11.50
Frost	11	32.45	10.41
McCarroll	21	37.48	10.76
Whittier	9	33.11	9.33
Wilson	17	40.76	8.63
Total	175	37.55	11.42

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Inspection of Table I indicates that the average number of correct responses was 37.55. This is 37 correct responses out of a total of 64 possible correct answers. Table II presents the post test means and standard deviations. Here the reported mean number of correct responses is 51.35.

Table II

Post-Test Means and Standard Deviations - Preschool Inventory

School	N	Means	Standard Deviation
Bagley	32	51.45	9.67
Bethune	31	48.26	12.77
Crofoot	19	51.58	12.05
Franklin	45	50.62	10.61
Frost	11	49.28	15.31
McCarroll	21	53.95	8.18
Whittier	9	52.22	7.19
Wilson	17	56.24	5.08
Total	175	51.35	10.67

Table III shows the comparison of pre and post test means and the resultant t test.

Table III

Comparisons of Pre-Test Post-Test
Means - Preschool Inventory

School	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	Gain	t-test
Bagley	35.54	51.45	15.91	9.37
Bethune	33.97	48.26	14.29	11.18
Crofoot	43.53	51.58	8.05	5.05
Franklin	39.44	50.62	11.18	11.65
Frost	32.45	49.28	16.83	7.27
McCarroll	37.48	53.95	16.47	10.80
Whittier	33.11	52.22	19.11	11.93
Wilson	40.76	56.24	15.48	9.62
Total	37.55	51.35	13.80	24.50

* all reported t tests are statistically significant at .01 level.

The t test for correlated means was used to determine whether or not the gains made by the children were statistically significant. This statistical test involves comparison of the difference between pre and post test means with what one would expect on the basis of chance. It is clearly evident that significant gains were made at all eight centers. When looking at the total group, it is seen that a t as large as 24.50 would occur by chance only one time out of a hundred.

Conclusion

The results indicate that the Head Start Program achieved its major instructional objectives. Children showed significant gain when pre and post test means were compared.

Since process evaluation was not carried out, it cannot be ascertained what factors in the Head Start Program account for the large gain shown by the participants. Moreover, no attempt was made to evaluate componants of the program other than the instructional componant. Future evaluation should address itself to the above factors.